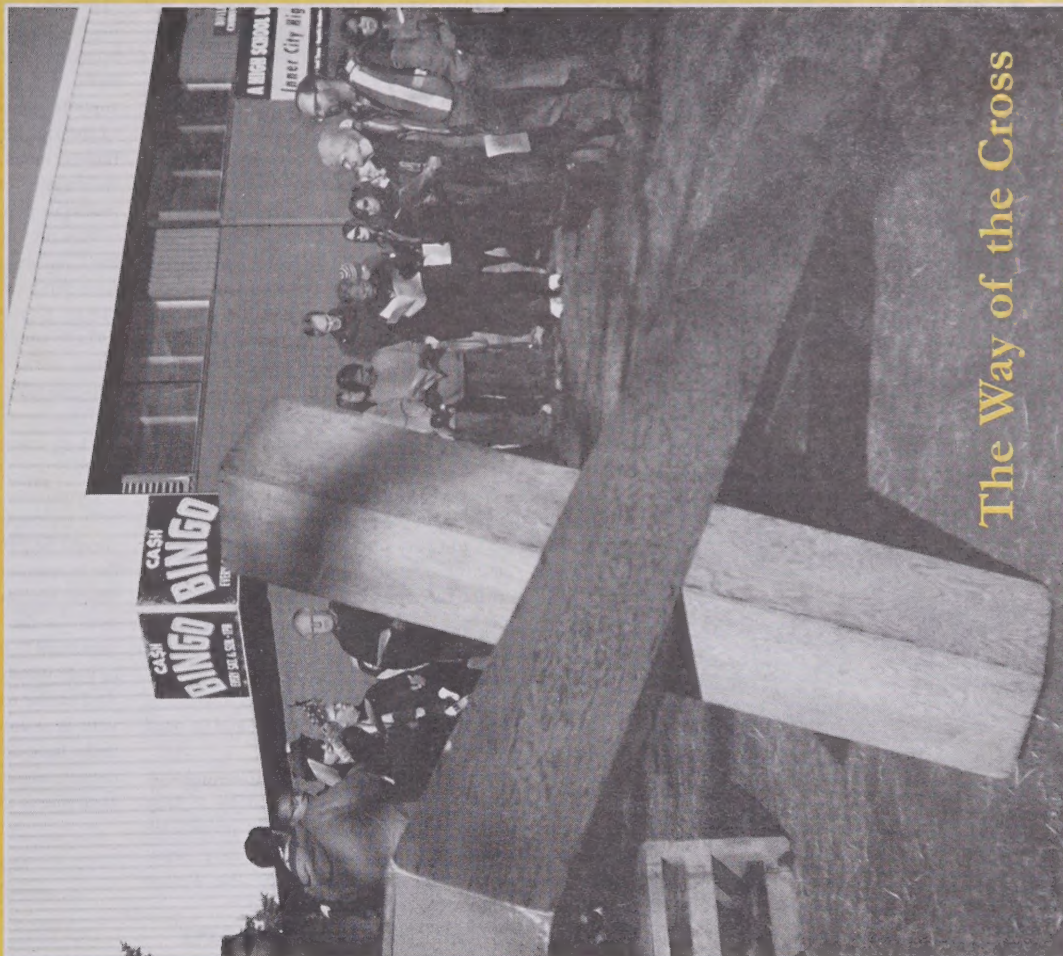




Edmonton Street News

Volume 7 Issue 5 2010



The Way of the Cross

Vendors pay 50 cents per paper

Community Groups that offer Meals

1. Bissell Centre

10527-96 Street - 423-2285
Monday to Friday - 9:30 a.m.
- sandwiches

Friday - 9:45 a.m. - sandwiches

3. Inner City Pastoral Ministry

at The Bissell Centre - 424-7652

Snacks after Sunday Service
- 12:00 to 1:00

4. Christ Church

12116-102 Avenue - 488-1118
Every 3rd Saturday - 5:00 p.m. meal

5. Herb Jamieson Centre

10014 -105A Avenue - 429-3470

For men not on assistance

Monday to Friday 7:00 to 7:45 a.m. breakfast

12:00 - 12:45 p.m. - lunch

5:00 to 5:45 p.m. - supper

Weekends 11:00 - 11:45 a.m. - breakfast
4:00 - 4:45 p.m. - supper

6. Hope Mission - 422-2018

Daily 7:00 to 7:45 - breakfast

Noon - lunch

5:00 to 6:45 - supper

7. House of Refuge Mission

10339-95 Street

Daily - 8 p.m. - meal

8. Marian Centre

10536-98 Street - 424-3544

Daily except Wednesdays

12:00 to 12:45 p.m. meal

Closed from the 27th of each month to the 1st

8. The Mustard Seed

10635-96 Street - 426-5600

Monday to Friday - 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. supper

Saturday - 5 p.m. - supper

Zero tolerance of alcohol

10. Operation Friendship

9526-106 Avenue - 429-2626

Monday to Friday - 9:00 a.m. - breakfast

Monday to Sunday - 12 noon - lunch

5:00 p.m. - supper

For seniors over 55 only

11. Red Road Healing Centre - 471-3220

Friday - 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. - soup and bannock

12. Salvation Army

9620-101 Avenue - 429-4222

Fridays - 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. - breakfast

13. St Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church

9606-110 Avenue - 426-1122

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 7:00

a.m. Breakfast

Amais

1st Friday of every month at 5:30.

Phone number 780 428 8697

14. St. Faith's Anglican Church - parish hall

11725-93 Street - 477-5931

Thursday - 12:00 noon - soup

Saturday - 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. - breakfast

3rd Friday of the month - 7:00 p.m. - supper

15. Emmaus Church

5015- 144 Avenue - 275-1647

Monday - 4:45 to 6:00 p.m. - meal

16. Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre

9611-101A Avenue - 423-5302

Meals for women staying at the shelter.

If not, bag lunch is given

17. Edmonton Orthodox Reformed Church

1161- 95 A Street - 479-1860

Thursdays, 6:25 p.m. soup

18. Robertson Wesley United Church

10209-123 Street 482-1587

Second Saturday of each month

January to November, 5:00 p.m. meal

19. Jasper Place Health and Wellness Centre

15210 - Stoney Plain Road - 481-4001

Mondays - 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. - meal

20. One Accord Bible Fellowship Church

10802 - 93 Street - 425-6310

Saturdays, 10:00 to 1:00 p.m. meals

Have you witnessed an act of violence against a homeless person, or been homeless, and a victim of violence?

If so, please fill out the form below and return to Edmonton Street News, 9533-106A Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 0S9

Name of person or persons involved (if known) _____

Date _____ Time _____ Where did the incident occur _____

What happened _____

ESN**Edmonton
Street News**

Volume 7 Issue 5 2010



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EDMONTON STREET NEWS

Edmonton Street News
Volume 7 Issue 5, 2010

Edmonton Street News is an independent publication produced by volunteers and sold by vendors on the street.

Editor: Linda Dumont
Allan Sheppard

Writers: Allan Sheppard, Linda Dumont, Edin Viso, Sharon Spencer, Judy Brown, Bob Mckeen, Nick Ritson-Bennet, Maria B. Delmy Farcia-Hoyt, Dan Scaber

Photographers: Jim Gurnett, Linda Dumont

Cover Photo: Way of the Cross by Jim Gurnett

The deadline for the June issue for advertisements and submissions is May 15, 2010.

Phone: 780 428-0805

email:
edmontonstreetnews@shaw.ca

Address:
9533-106A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 0S9

Mission

Edmonton Street News Society provides a voice, employment and social support to those who need these, and communicates perspectives dealing with poverty and social justice, by education and communication activities, including publishing a street newspaper

Values/Beliefs/Guiding Principles

We believe in being inclusive and encouraging
We believe that human rights are fundamental to living together
We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to earn and control their money
We believe in journalistic and organizational professionalism and integrity
We believe the public needs to know about issues around poverty and social justice
We value community and connecting with others
We value passion and determination
We believe everyone deserves the opportunity to learn, develop and use communication skills

The views presented in this publication are those of the writers.

Editorial - Thoughts about the upcoming election

The recent announcement by Stephen Mandel that he will be seeking a third term as mayor of Edmonton is a reminder that this is municipal election year in Alberta. On October 18 people will go to the polls in every municipality. In Edmonton a mayor, 12 city councillors, and two school boards will be elected. In all the surrounding communities there will also be elections.

People interested in being elected are now actively starting to seek support and to think about their positions. Campaigns will get up and running over the summer. Edmonton Street News is concerned that the issues that matter to people on the margins can be easily forgotten in a campaign. As candidates get ready for action and as citizens start thinking about who to support, we offer an agenda of issues that should be an active part of the debate. We encourage ESN readers to ask questions as they encounter candidates.

· Do you support a commitment by the City of Edmonton to a living wage (currently about \$13/hour) being a minimum for anyone associated with employment through the City? This means not only actual City employees but anyone working for a company or agency with a contract to provide services to or for the City, or a grant from the City for some activity.

· Do you support the development of a bus pass for people with low incomes, with fair criteria and a sensible administrative process to minimize difficulties for people to access it and the potential for abuse?

· Do you support an end to closures of schools in areas of the city that are economically disadvantaged and in need of renewal?

· What is your position on an approach where complaints about police misbehaviour are investigated by a fully independent civilian office, so police cannot investigate themselves? What is your position about a clearer separation of the mandate and activity of the Police

Commission and the police service?

· Does the City need a more comprehensive plan on housing security for all, beyond the current "plan to end homelessness" that only addresses a small number of those with housing problems? What measures do you support to ensure decent affordable shelter for everyone?

· Libraries are a vital information source for people with limited incomes. Should there be more financial support so libraries can be open longer hours and provide more materials and services?

· With provincial cuts to social services, do you believe the City should do more to supplement the funding for such services as counselling for people unable to pay for private services?

· Many small not-for-profit organizations that provide a range of helpful and important programs and services struggle with having the space they need for their work (offices, room for classes and activities). Do you support the City taking a lead role in the development of one or more centres that could provide affordable space for such organizations?

ESN welcomes input from readers about other issues that should be part of the debate during the months ahead, as the municipal election moves ahead. Remember that the people elected will be in powerful positions to affect our lives for the next three years after the election, so it is important to have good information about their views and to vote wisely.

And on the topic of voting—the percentage of those who vote in municipal elections is very small. Plan now to make time on October 18 to cast your ballot. More information about all aspects of the municipal election is available at the City of Edmonton website.

ESN

Outrage: It's all the rage these days

There's nothing like a good dose of outrage to catch the attention of the masses, the media, or the political classes. If you want to rally public opinion and support against some person or thing that offends you, it's remarkably easy to stir up a bit of outrage to make your point. Or perhaps to avoid making a point and instead to arouse emotions and resentments that make rational argument and responses unnecessary and even undesirable.

We have a local and recurrent example here: apparent efforts by the Edmonton Police Service and certain business and community organizations to generate public outrage around the presence—nay, the overwhelming prevalence—of panhandling and panhandlers on our streets and in our public spaces. It's probably coincidental that a report on panhandling, written on April 7 and presented to city council on April 19, should have surfaced just in time for panhandling season; spring has come early this year. What seems not coincidental is the nature of some of the information presented in the report (summarized on page 3 this issue of ESN); information that seems strategically designed and intended to generate enough outrage to force council to do something—anything, and quickly—to stop panhandling.

Some of that information is best regarded as urban myth: some panhandlers make \$40 an hour and, by extension, \$300 a day, \$1,500 a week, and \$75,000 a year, assuming eight-hour days, 50 weeks a year; some young panhandlers are from wealthy families and have good homes to go to; some panhandlers travel a circuit that takes them to Edmonton in the summer and the coast for the winter. None of this information is supported by research or data, only the opinions of the police and others making the case; it could be true or false, and we have no reliable way of knowing which. When Debi Anderson, the community services department manager who wrote the latest report, asked council last fall for money to survey panhandlers, she was turned down on the grounds of cost and a desire on the part of council and the media for quick action. Which can be interpreted generously to indicate that councillors and the media were (and are) reluctant to let possible facts get in the way of untested presumptions and assumptions about outrageous things happening on our streets.

There is also information that some panhandlers are not homeless and some of them regard panhandling as employment. So? Given the current levels of social assistance (See *Cost of housing exceeds income for those on government assistance*, in this issue of ESN), many recipients need to supplement their income to meet basic survival needs after they pay for housing. They could, as a comment in a recent Edmonton Sun discussion of the panhandling report suggested, get a job. But some of Edmonton's working poor already have jobs that just hap-

pen not to pay very well. And as for those who don't have jobs, for many of them—lone parents, the aged, the infirm, those with mental health and addictions issues—working is not a viable option. Panhandling can be a viable (even if embarrassing and difficult) option. Just don't think of it as a job.

What is scary about this information in this context is the implied suggestion that panhandling is okay—if the panhandler is actually homeless and panhandles out of desperation, rather than as a freely chosen means of earning a living. If there is anything truly outrageous about such efforts to generate outrage about panhandling, it is the unspoken understanding that we are prepared to tolerate panhandlers as long as they really need the money and don't have any other way to get it—provided only that they don't interfere with business or the ability of police to maintain order and public safety.

Some of you may be outraged to know that the logical response to the urban fact of complexity in addressing the challenges of panhandling and the necessity of holistic and integrated solutions—outreach to support homeless panhandlers—is not being pursued in a targeted way and probably won't be attempted any time soon, presumably due to lack of funding. Or political and public will. Instead, we have a public education program aimed at redirecting public donations: kiosks will be set up at city festivals this summer to educate people not to give money to panhandlers, and to take donations for agencies that serve street people. It sounds good but achieves nothing.

We also have a bylaw that sets fines of \$250 to \$500 for panhandling. A possibly mythical \$40-an-hour (tax-free) panhandler can afford that; a typical needy, addicted, or mentally ill panhandler cannot. So we help them off the streets by putting them in jail for failing to pay fines. How futile!

My goal here is not to defend panhandlers or to undermine viable, realistic efforts to eliminate panhandling. I want to see an end to panhandling, for the good of the city, its neighbourhoods, and its business communities, and for the good of panhandlers who have needs (some defensible, some questionable) that our society, for many complicated reasons (some good, some not), seems unable or unwilling to meet or accommodate.

If there is outrage to be found in all this, it is surely that some among us cannot survive except by panhandling. Outrage against the possibility that there may (or may not) be people who game the system and exploit the goodwill of generous citizens should not be allowed to obscure that truth. The gamers and the scammers are a nuisance that could be managed much more easily if we all knew that those who really need help are getting it and do not have to beg on the streets.

By Allan Sheppard

"Options to Address Panhandling": Edmonton

On Tuesday, April 19, the city council's community services committee met to consider, among many items on the agenda, Options to Address Panhandling, an April 7 report prepared by the city's community services department.

Debi Anderson, director of community-building south in the community services department, wrote the report after consultations with stakeholders: "Edmonton Police Service, Old Strathcona Business Association, and several social service organizations that provide services directly to street people," are mentioned.

Options to Address Panhandling was presented to the community services committee with a recommendation that it be "received for information," giving the background to an "action plan (that) is underway and seeks to increase public safety in relation to panhandling."

The information included "confirmed the importance of understanding" some key points:

- "not all panhandlers are homeless
- "some (panhandlers) view panhandling as their employment

- "issues faced by street people are often complex and include addictions and mental health issues that require holistic integrated solutions"

The information also notes that "successful municipal approaches to addressing panhandling are comprehensive, integrated and include

- "outreach to support homeless panhandlers to seek housing and employment

- "public education

- "a viable option for re-directing citizen donations"

The report includes an overview of the action plan that is now underway, describing it as an "integrated approach to reducing the incidence of panhandling and provide referrals and alternatives to panhandling in the target areas of Downtown and Old Strathcona."

The action plan is being carried out by an "integrated team" that includes the stakeholders consulted by the community services department for the report augmented by the REACH Edmonton Council and the Edmonton Homeless Commission.

In the short term the team will "outline methods to deal with panhandling including "increased presence of outreach workers through Boyle Street Community Services.

- "...education material to educate panhandlers about available services

- "...education material to educate the public and businesses regarding housing and employment barriers faced by those who panhandle"

The public education material "discourages citizens from giving money to panhandlers" and encourages "timely giving to social service agencies that provide services to those who panhandle."

This public education part of the action plan seems to be the only component with a specific planning in the works: Kiosks to provide information on panhandling and take donations for social service agencies that work with the homeless will be set up at some city festivals during the summer.

In the long term, the action plan will, according to the report, "link its efforts with strategies outlined in...Edmonton's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness." It will seek the help of the REACH Edmonton Council "in understanding the issue of panhandling from the panhandlers' point of view and seeking innovative solutions focused on root causes." It will also look at "preventive alternatives such as (an) innovative social enterprise project by Boyle Street Community Services."

While the report presents the views of "stakeholders" who are affected by panhandling and who provide or offer services to

panhandlers, it does not include any input from citizens who currently panhandle or who have a history of panhandling.

"There wasn't great support from council for us to do that, or by the press," explains Debi Anderson, adding, "I think they (the councillors) were concerned about the expense....And I think they wanted us to move promptly. They wanted us to act, not study. They said talk to the social service agencies and the businesses."

Perhaps for the same reason, the information in the report and its appendices is not based on formal research or hard data. It is anecdotal, based on the observations and interpretations of police, business operators, and agency workers. It includes, Anderson says, allegations from business operators that some youths panhandling in Old Strathcona are "Riverbend kids (who) have homes to go home to." Anderson adds, "They're some of the ones that really upset folks on Whyte Avenue."

Some Whyte Avenue business operators also suggest that panhandling youths that "travel from city to city, might spend the winter in Vancouver and the summer here (in Edmonton)," says Anderson. Neither claim is substantiated.

The report also includes often-repeated allegations from police that some panhandlers in Edmonton are taking in \$40-an-

hour, and as many as 30 or 40 panhandlers are aggressive and persistent to a point where they threaten public safety.

Some news reports following release of Options to Address Panhandling interpreted information that the Boyle Street Community Centre is sending outreach workers into the streets to work with panhandlers and support them in efforts to get off the street. Boyle Street's Lance Beswick says that is not the case, at least not yet. Boyle Street's deputy director David Berger says, "the agency has outreach workers who go to areas frequented by street people throughout the city; they may work with people who panhandle, but panhandlers are so far not a special focus for their work".

In fact, the report says that the integrated team, which has only recently been set up to address panhandling, will merely "outline methods to deal with panhandling," one of options under consideration being increased outreach.

A copy of Options to Address Panhandling, including appendices on feedback from stakeholders, a snapshot of panhandling, and a panhandling strategy is available online at <http://sirepub.edmonton.ca/sirepub/cache/2/1ee0qz45kka453edfzxcufev/3854704192010094856468.PDF>

By Allan Sheppard

To give or not to give to panhandlers



Photo: Woody picks bottles and panhandles. He said, "I just scrape by, making a little money for food and the occasional bottle."

As I walk to the super market, I pass several panhandlers. I'm asked, "Can you spare a few change?" I recognize most of them. I've seen them on the street outside the Boyle McCauley Health Centre, eating at the House of Refuge Mission, or sitting in small groups in the back alleys of the neighbourhood sharing a bottle. That bottle often represents the pooled money donated to a number of panhandlers over a period of several hours. They combine their nickels, dimes, quarters and occasional loonies to buy a bottle of Axe Head beer - the beer that has an 11 per cent alcohol content. Most of them have back packs, one of the easily recognizable indications of homelessness. They have to carry everything with them since there is no home to store their stuff, and it is also important to conceal that bottle from others who would want to share or steal it. Some do have homes, but with income from social assistance, rent eats up most or all of the monthly check. And some live with relatives, but can't go home due to addictions. Most of them also have tickets - those pink pieces of paper issued for drinking in public, panhandling etc. (when you are homeless, you do everything in public, even urinate, and get a ticket for that, too - for littering or indecent exposure no less). Those tickets are almost never paid.

They represent a day or two in Remand Centre. How much panhandlers make depends on the public - on who happens to come by. When talking to panhandlers I hear the stories of the occasional windfall when someone is given a \$50 bill, or more, but those are rare occasions. It's a lot like when selling a street newspaper. I know from experience as a news paper vendor that while there have been a few occasions when I received a large donation, those occasions are far between. Income from panhandling meets immediate needs of the panhandler, and we each have a choice as to whether to give or not. Giving money to agencies, no matter how many programs they provide, cannot replace the need for ready cash. The whole idea of kiosks where people can donate money and using the problem created by aggressive panhandlers to motivate people to give there rather than on the street, appears to be just another way to manipulate the public into supporting specific organizations and agencies. I have no objection to agencies seeking donations at kiosks or anywhere else, but I do object to the use of anti-panhandling propaganda to encourage donations. Agencies and programs cannot and should not replace human compassion on a person to person level.

By Linda Dumont

Gospel Music Jamboree

Hosted by House of Refuge Mission
Saturday, May 22, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m.
at Boyle Street Community Centre
9515-104 Avenue
Dinner of Soup and Sandwiches at
7:00 p.m.

Free Everyone Welcome

Come join us for an afternoon of music, testimonies and fellowship
For more information call Calvin at
780-232-3564

Stations of the Cross

Be Bold in Our Hope Station 2 – in front of the Bissell Centre By Nick Ritson-Bennett

We are standing at Station Number Two, located at Bissell Centre. We are looking across at a mural depicting the diverse individuals and families who have passed with renewed hope through the doors of the Bissell Centre for the past 100 years, dating back to 1910. We are here to reflect on how to better meet the need for affordable housing for the working poor, new immigrants, mean and women living with mental health and substance abuse issues.

The genesis of the affordable housing problem dates back to 1993 when both the federal and provincial governments decided to cut government supported affordable housing as a deficit reduction measure. In Edmonton advocacy groups such as the Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (ECOHH) kept the spotlight on the lack of affordable housing. Throughout the 90's and right up until today governments have come again to realize that affordable housing is an essential need if low income and/or people with barriers are to either avoid or climb out of poverty. That is the hope. Yet the provincial government continues to pull back dollars it had committed to helping the municipalities to build or renovate existing affordable or transitional housing or to provide below market housing. In 2007 the Alberta conservatives gave Edmonton \$45.3 million under its "Municipal Sustainability Housing Program".

In 2008 this was reduced to \$34.3 million and in June, 2009 it was cut to \$30.3 million. The reduced funding has meant that new initiatives such as Housing First that have been funded by reducing funds available for other programs such as new construction of affordable housing and rent supplement for working, low income families and individuals facing 40 per cent or more of their income to rent at current market prices in Edmonton. On a positive note recently the

government did announce funding initiatives for The Mustard Seed and Hope Mission to either renovate or build from scratch apartment style accommodation for men and women facing housing barriers.

How do we get more attention for affordable housing? It means writing your MLA, it means advocating for a progressive provincial income tax system. It means turning out for rallies and town hall meetings. You saw what the petroleum industry accomplished in get-

less defender of the poor and suffering.

Bishop Romero said: "We must save not the soul at the hour of death but the person living in history."

As Romero surrendered to the demands of the gospel, he gave voice to a church of the poor and embraced a belief in the historical dimension of liberation.

By choosing the poor, Romero did not intend to cut off the rich, the government or the military. On the contrary, he called them to conversion. When the powerful turned against him, he called for their conversion. When the security forces plotted his murder, he embraced them with love. Like his mentor Jesus, he called for forgiveness in the mist of his people's crucifixion.

Romero's great faith was that he believed in the poor. He saw them as protagonists, organizers in forging their own destinies and rebuilding their shattered communities. He was willing to bet his life on this conviction. He was willing to risk his ecclesial reputation, to be considered a dupe of the popular organizations, a puppet of the progressive Jesuits. He saw their agony and their hope in a word, he saw the face of God.

Romero is a twentieth century prophet whose life is not only a symbol but a gift to

those of us who struggle as we search for a spiritual path for the new millennium. He often said that we run the risk of becoming insensitive to suffering and death. In all his homilies he tried to make the world see the value of every human life and feel the pain behind each death in El Salvador's struggle for human justice.

Romero's entry into the world of the poor brought him face to face with his people, crucified by poverty and tortured by violence. There Romero discovered, in the wounds of the poor, a source of life, light, and salvation for the world.

What did Romero mean by "the face of the poor"? Precisely he meant the face of those who suffer, endure, and resist. That is the face of those involved in land takeovers and labor disputes, and those captured, disappeared, and assassinated by the death



ting reduced royalties for conventional gas drillers, the changes to Alberta Hospital bed closures. Well, both these initiatives meant walking as Jesus Christ did – carrying the cross so government had to listen.

"A Just World" Station: 4th – in front of the Haven building By Delmy Farcia-Hoyt, Base Christian Communities

30th anniversary of Archbishop Romero
Archbishop Romero gave his life for the church and the people of his beloved country of El Salvador. His death from an assassin's bullet on March 24, 1980, crowned a life of service as priest and bishop. During his three years as archbishop of San Salvador, he became known across the world as a fear-

Cost of housing can exceed income for those on government assistance

One of the areas of concern raised at the review of the first year of the Ten Year Plan was the reality that there is very little affordable housing for people on low fixed incomes from pensions or social assistance or even low paying employment. But, do you realize just how low that fixed income is?

Housing costs are ideally not to exceed one third of total income, but realistically for persons on social assistance (Alberta Works benefits) housing often eats up 90 per cent or more of total income from monthly cheques. Welfare rates for persons who are single and employable or classified as looking for work, have increased by less than \$200 per month since 1993 when the rates were slashed by the Klein government. Even with this raise, that monthly check of \$583 per month does not, in many cases, even cover the cost of housing. When I was attempting to secure housing for a homeless ESN vendor, the only housing that was within his price range was a room in a rooming house in the inner city with a shared kitchen and bathroom for \$450 per month. For him, that necessitates eating meals out at soup kitchen.

For those on medical welfare who are classified as 'Not Expected to Work' income varies and is more than for those able to work. Need appears to be determined also

due to high cost of housing and as to how well the client arbitrates for himself or herself. One woman who is on medical welfare now receives \$1,100 per month because her rent is too high and she has spent afternoons in the Alberta Works office where she was insistent that she could not live on what she was previously offered. She even had her doctor write a letter stating that it would be detrimental to her health to have to move. But most people on medical receive less than she does. One of our ESN vendors receives \$870 a month and rents a small one-bedroom basement suite in the inner city for \$750 a month.

Even on AISH benefits that are roughly \$1190 per month, a simple one-bedroom suite or a room with shared kitchen and bathroom can take more than half of the check. Pedro, an inner city street pastor, pays \$604 a month, roughly half his income, for a room at the YMCA that includes use of a kitchen area with a hot plate and toaster oven, and a bathroom shared by 17 people. He can have a microwave in his room.

Families fare no better. A two-parent family with three children (under 12 years) receives \$1,240 a month while the parents look for work plus \$461 a month from the federal family allowance (National Child

Benefit). If a parent receives money from child support payments, that is deducted dollar for dollar from the monthly check.

For a family with five children, housing costs could easily exceed \$1,000 per month, and the wait for subsidized housing can take several years once you apply.

While waiting, the family can be paying more than half their income on housing, not leaving much money left for all other necessities such as food, and clothing for the children, and looking for work for the parents. The wait for subsidized housing can take several years after you apply.

People on assistance who work can earn an extra \$230 per month. For anything beyond that, 75 per cent of the additional earnings are deducted from the cheques. Couples fare worse than two singles because each one can only earn \$115 per month with a deduction of 75 per cent of any additional earnings. This discrimination against couples as opposed to two people sharing accommodation encourages people to live common law without the imposed financial burdens that come with marriage. I have been told, "We can't afford to get married. It would mean too much loss of income."

By Linda Dumont

squads and security forces. In the context of this world Romero tried to discern "the signs of the time" he point out to the people the way to go: "Not there. but here."

Bishop Romero said: "The poor tell us what our world is really like, and what the mission of the church should be."

Romero reminds us that the mission of the church is: "a society that prepares the way for the true kingdom of God in history. To be the voice of the voiceless, a defender of the rights of the poor, a promoter of every just aspiration for liberation, a guide, an empowerer, a humanizer of every legitimate struggle to achieve a more just society."

And Romero added: "The church cannot remain silent. It has to speak out."

His memory is a subversive one: it reminds us that the world is not meant to remain in its current state, where the poor are excluded, the hungry forgotten, those who grieve hidden from view, and the victims are blamed for their persecution. Rather, the poor are blessed because theirs is the reign of God. Life, not death, will have the last word.

His life is a witness that allows us to interrogate power and to find hope rather than despair in the face of an often dehumanizing globalization. His legacy and our challenge is to discover the idols that crush the poor in our world today and to side with the poor in their struggle for dignity.

Earlier this week a group of Edmontonians completed a journey to El Salvador to walk with, to listen to, and learn from the poor about their ongoing struggles to build God's Kingdom on earth. We visited a community where the Pacific Rim Mining Corporation, a Canadian owned business, wants to build a gold mine on ecologically fragile land. This mine if allowed to be built would contaminate and destroy the precious water supply that sustains the life of those who live on that land. We learned about three social activists martyred in recent months as they tried to educate the community about the destructive potential of this mine. We listened to young people who have been threatened with death for having the courage to educate the local population through public radio about the impending threat of this mine.

In response to what we saw and heard we visited the Canadian ambassador in El Salvador to express our grave concern about this situation. We asked for assurance that our government would do everything in its power to press the Salvadoran government to investigate these deaths and hold to account whoever is responsible and not excluding Pacific Rim if they are found implicated. We asked for assurance that our government will not pressure the Salvadoran government let up on its decision to stop metal mining in its fragile ecology. We also called upon the Canadian government to develop effective and enforceable laws to ensure that the activities of companies like the Pacific Rim Mining Corporation are in accordance with corporate social responsibility, such as proposed in Bill C-300, an Act on Corporate Accountability for the Activities of Mining, Oil or Gas in Developing Countries.

We must stand with our brothers and sisters, like those with the Radio Victoria in El Salvador.

Bishop Romero said: "If somebody take away the radio station from us, if they close down the newspaper, if they don't let us speak, if they kill all the priests, each one of you must become God's microphone, each one of you must become a messenger, a prophet."

Let each one of you, in your own vocation - nun, married person, bishop, priest, high-school or university student, workman, laborer, market woman - each one in your own place live the faith intensely and feel that in your surroundings you are a true microphone of God.

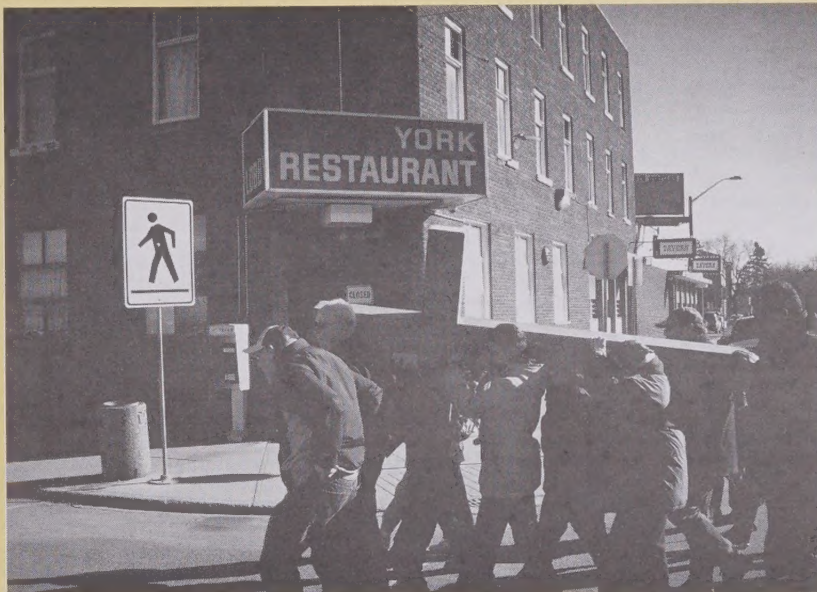
We want to be the voice of those who have no voice, in order to try out against

every assault on our human rights so that justice is done.

Bishop Romero Presente!!!!

Health for All Station Five - in front of the Boyle McCauley Health Centre By Bob McKeon, Social Justice, Edmonton Roman Catholic Archdiocese

In inner city Edmonton many struggle with illness and basic health challenges. Being homeless, having inadequate food, being too poor to pay for the basics means every day can be a difficult struggle. Living addicted to drugs and alcohol can have serious health consequences. The violence of the



street and the wider society presents a threat to life.

The ever changing decisions and commitments of government with respect to priorities and funding for basic social services and health care can create serious gaps where poor women, men, and children often pay the highest price in terms of their physical and mental health.

Thirty years ago, a group of neighbourhood residents, social agency workers, health care professionals and government partners started meeting together on this street with a bold hope that accessible high-quality health care could become available for all in Edmonton's inner city neighbourhoods, regardless of income or health status. These early meetings led to the creation of the Boyle-McCauley Health Centre. Over the years, this Health Centre has contributed much to support many in their struggles towards greater healing and health in inner

city Edmonton.

Jesus is frequently described in the gospels as a healer. There are many gospel stories of Jesus healing the physical, mental and spiritual illnesses of those he encountered. On the first Good Friday, so many years ago, Jesus' body was broken by the torture of the Roman soldiers. No health care was offered. Every day we see human life breaking because of the rigors of inner city life often in the face of inadequate social supports.

Let us be bold in our hope. Let us all commit to become healers. The dedicated staff, volunteers and supporters of the Boyle McCauley Health Centre have provided a wonderful model of what it means to be a healer in today's world.

Luke 4:38-40

After leaving the synagogue Jesus entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked about her. Then he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and began to serve them.

As the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various kinds of diseases brought them to him: and he laid his hands on each of them and cured them.

Prayers: Response "Hear our prayer, O God"

Let us pray for all those whose health is being damaged by homelessness, poverty, inadequate food and lack of access to needed health

care in Edmonton and around the world. Let us pray for those whose spirit is breaking, those feeling distant from the love of family, friends and community, and from the love of God

Let us pray that we commit ourselves to become true healers following the example of Jesus in the Gospels. Let us pray for health professionals that they be faithful in their call to be healers. Let us pray especially for all those associated with the Boyle McCauley Health Centre that their healing presence may continue for many years into the future.

2010 marked the 30th Anniversary of the annual Good Friday Way of the Cross. More than 1000 people gathered at the Boyle Street Community Hall, then walked through the inner city, stopping at seven stations for reflection and prayer.



Hugh MacDonald, MLA Edmonton-Gold Bar

Constituency Office
Edmonton Gold Bar
#102, 7024 - 101 Avenue, NW
Edmonton, Alberta T6A 0H7
Tel: 414-1015
Fax: 414-1017



e-mail: hugh.macdonald@assembly.ab.ca
website: www.liberalopposition.com

Aboriginal woman honoured as a woman of God



As an Aboriginal woman, a wife and mother and a full time minister of God, Linda Burns has had to overcome many challenges in her life, but she says, "I know no matter what condition you may be in, there is nothing impossible to change in your life."

"I was a runaway from home when I was 14 years old. I lived on the streets in Edmonton until I was 19, homeless a lot of the time, and hungry. I didn't know about soup kitchens and places like that. Then I met my husband when I was 19. We were both really into alcoholism."

"We moved to Prince Albert in 1980 and God found us. At the time I was feeling lost, suicidal and depressed. I needed help. My sister was a Christian and she started telling me there was a better way. There was something different about her. I got saved in my bedroom on October 19, 1985 and my husband two months later. We married on December 6, 1985, and have been together for 33 years. My eldest boy is 33 now and the youngest is turning 20. I have 16 grand-children."

Linda and her husband moved to Edmonton in 1989 and started the Native

Gospel Outreach, working as co-pastors out of Alex Taylor School. After five years, they moved to the McCauley Community Hall, then after five years there, to Eastwood Community Hall where they are still working.

"I had a vision when I got saved. I saw my husband and I together holding our Bibles and people were being ministered to. That's when I knew God was calling me to work with Aboriginal people."

"I became interested in street ministry when I started going to a church on 114th and Jasper Avenue, and the House of Refuge was there as well. I wanted to get more involved in ministry to the inner city people. I could relate to them because of the life I had lived."

In addition to regular church services, Linda started First Nations Women's Conferences in 2007, holding them three or four times a year to build up women's faith and to give them purpose in their lives. More than 80 women come from the reserves and Aboriginal communities as far away as Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

She said, "A lot of the women we deal with have a lot of personal issues and brokenness."

In the summer, the Burns hold camp meetings at Good Fish Lake, Linda's home reserve, and where-ever they are invited to minister at reservations. They have a tent that seats 200 people. Linda also ministers at the House of Refuge Mission every second Monday evening.

In addition to preaching the gospel, Linda is a gifted musician. She plays the guitar and writes her own songs that she sings in both English and Cree, which she speaks fluently.

"There's a song I have written and the words stem back to the Cree language. I call it 'Kaya maga' meaning 'the only one'. I chose

this title because Jesus was the only one who could change my life," she said.

Linda's work in ministry was recognized at a special ceremony, Honouring a Woman of God, on Feb. 13, 2010 at the Beacon Heights Community Centre. An Aboriginal woman named Creena Mason who lives in Northern Alberta, organized the event, calling together more than 100 people, including some from Good Fish Lake, and a Saddle Lake councillor as well as people from across Canada, to honour Linda and to bring gifts. At the ceremony Linda was presented with a plaque and an autobiography is being videotaped of her work in ministry.

"I was so happy and honoured by all the people who came and I could feel the love. It was my special day. I feel God has really been pleased with all of the work I've done to help the lost and the dying. This is my hearts' desire - that they can find Jesus and make a change in their lives."

By Linda Dumont



The question is: Why share this secret?

I do not know the answer. But one who faces a turning point in life and requires only slight encouragement.

If that is you, I hope this sincerely told tale will help.

Edin "Ed" Viso is a Yugoslavian immigrant who is learning to live in a new country and write in a new language. He is influenced by the Argentinian surrealist writer Jorge Luis Borges.

[Edin Viso's received editing help from Edmonton Street News staff for this contribution. If you would like to participate in ESN's writers' support program, please submit stories, poems, essays, or news reports—500 words maximum—to allansheppard23@yahoo.ca or edmontonstreetnews@shaw.ca]

A Kind of Madness

A tale by Edin Viso.

Today I met an angel. Dressed in an old, gray coat. Sitting on a dusty sidewalk. Stone beads in his (or her) hands.

Something inexplicable attracted me to this being, her long, blonde hair glowing in the sun's light.

He(she) noticed me and approached me quickly. His(her) bearing stunned and amazed me. I felt a wave of questions between us.

"Well Ed, where were you all day? My butt is stiff from sitting. My legs are sore from searching. My lips are numb from praying. My eyes weep. I feared I had lost you."

Surprise is too small and too weak a word to describe the condition in which I found myself then. Somehow I mustered the strength to speak. "I am—But how do you know my name?"

The angel laughed, her(his) voice falling like an indescribable melody

"I have come to convey the message that you have calling many times a day, and we are bored."

Again the laughter poured out.

"I laugh because I know very well how to deal with boring petitions."

"It is what you do when anxiety riles you up when you want to avoid an encounter with the world. Isn't the truth?" he(she) asked me, gently touching my shoulder, his(her) piercing gaze driving into my eyes to find the answer to his (or her) question.

"I do not know," I answered, shrugging against her(his) touch.

"Listen to me now, you foolish man, so dear to us yet invisible to fields and deserts. No one is too old to be changed, so old that he can not go back to the field of his dreams. No one is ever so tired that it is too late to begin again, to learn a new game."

"You are our phoenix. Your wings are more beautiful and brighter than ever."

"Turn a new page and show that we are not mistaken in choosing you as a light-house. If you try hard; if you talk with the stars, listen to the wind, touch the rain, we

will bring you help."

With eyes wide open, with lips parted, I listened to the words. I felt the earth spin around me. Convinced that I would fall, I closed my eyes. When I opened them again, I found myself standing in a parking lot, alone.

At first I thought it was all over,. Then I started to feel a kind of madness. As I stumbled home, the wind through the foliage spilled magical Borges laughter along the river. It seemed to say, "Ed the comfort begins now."

I ran into the house smiling inwardly. I felt new hope and strength to start or continue the struggle for life that is so precious.

A Tribute of a Mother to her Children



The day you were born and I put my eyes on you, I knew that you were a true reflection of God's presence in earth.

I held your tender hand and a realized how our lives were inter-

twined

In such a way that the gift of life and love flowed freely as we gave each other a reason to live.

You came into this life with incredible gifts and through you I learned kindness, forgiveness, patience, unconditional love, honesty and respect.

Your sole presence made me realize that as a mother I would be able to make a difference on your life,

As I would become the beacon that would emanate with incredible brilliance and give you clarity in your life.

Through me you would know that truth,

respect and honesty will be the foundation that you need to succeed as a unique and incredible human being.

My love for you is from the heart, I promised to give the guidance that would encourage you to learn the lessons in Life

And through my love I hope it has become the aura of acceptance of yourself that you need

In order that you believe in yourself and unveil to the world the magnificence of your being.

My beautiful child, I am so grateful to our creator for allowing me to play such an important role in your precious life.

As a mother I made a commitment and I will continue to keep my commitment until my eyes fail see the sunrise of tomorrow

My commitment is to love you unconditionally, to honour you, to cherish you and to be there for you

With our love we will hold the golden thread that forms the tapestry of our family protecting and loving each other forever.

Your Mom

Maria B.

Mama's Chickens

Ch 20 Promises
Sharo Spence

Well I was definitely back home in the Maritimes; home sweet home wherever that may have been. Wherever Maritimers' roam they inevitably end up in there own back yards again. We leave to find better jobs and more exciting ways of life, but we are always drawn back to the simple Maritime way of life. No other place is able earn our allegiance, for the salt water rushes through our veins and the sea calls us home constantly, home once more to our uncomplicated way of life and warm hospitality, never to be content with mere monetary gain, always feeling that something is lacking in the places of prosperity. We flounder around like a fish out of water, forever out of pace with our surroundings.

Times have always been hard in the Maritimes. Perhaps it is the one common factor that we all share. With poverty being the common bond, answers are found, burdens are mutual. If someone is in great need due to illness or fire the community responds through jamborees and dances. Most or all of us have experienced poverty. It is our roots and our heritage. Although big cities can provide better substance and a faster pace, they are full of unsmiling faces with cold eyes busily rushing past, afraid to notice what surrounds them, so it is we stay and endure harsh winters and poor pay, and are compensated by our laid back kind of life and our comrades.

Halifax was as dry as a bone - no jobs to be bought or sold, but somehow there was always a party going on somewhere and everyone was welcomed. There was always a good time to be had, but somehow there wasn't always food. Sometimes I would go two or three days without food ever touching my lips. Then I would be faced with the fundamental needs of my body for food and shelter.

With limited skill in survival and life, my choices were very slim. As always hunger would conquer any resistance from pride. Usually I would end up at the Carousal Club, which was a downtown club where everyone hung out. For a few hours I would be able to forget my circumstances, laugh, dance and be merry. As the evening drew to a close my situation would close in on me. My homelessness needed to be confronted. With every tick of the clock my foreboding increased. A solution had to be found quickly. Fortunately there was always someone to lend you a couch or floor to lie on, safely out of the winter for a night, but the constant impending fear dangled over your head like a swinging double bladed ax.

Once in the home you were very aware this was someone else's home and they had the supremacy over you, ever ready to become bored or angry with you taking up space in their abode. Some of us would take on the fine art of invisibility, trying not to be seen, and heard as little as possible, hoping

for chameleon skills that would help us to either blend in or better still go unnoticed. Another tactic would be to make yourself totally indispensable to the host was cheerfully doing all of the drudge work hated by others in the household, hopefully making you indispensable. Anything was better than the relentless bitter, Atlantic wind coming off the ocean like a mad march hare ripping through your thin coat, chilling deep inside your small bones till they ached and cried out for compassion and the merciless, black asphalt leading nowhere.

One night I was dancing at my favorite haunt that had just gone topless, when the owner came to me and asked if I would like to dance in his club. The pay was great and so was the temptation. But this was Halifax, my hometown. There would be no hiding here. Everyone would know. I would be very openly disgraced. But as always, in the end, my good intentions lost out, and my hunger resolved the issue for me. Again I entered the upside down world of the night people, those who lived for the night and sought the darkness to inflame their passions for loud music, escape, dazzling lights and sex. Everything kind of had the taste of Jack and Jill tumbling, tumbling down the hill.

You slept all day so you could dance in front of a bunch of lewd men making catcalls at your almost naked body. The leering faces soon disposed of any glamour attached to the dancing. It was hard to get up on that stage and know your body was the center of attention. Soon, however, I found my courage in the liberal supply of liquor available to us. Several good stiff drinks and I could have danced half-naked for the Queen. No more worry about where I would stay that night, or how I would eat. The only thing I needed to sacrifice was such a small thing that in the end there was no contest. That small thing was my wounded pride that already was shredded and tattered to small pieces.

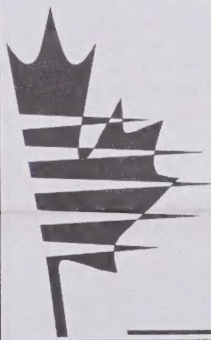
It is not my belief that a woman wakes up one day and says "I think I'll become a stripper or a hooker." Throughout her life, forces have been at work, preparing her for that day when the sacrifice of herself would seem the only option and of so little consequence.

Endless nights drifted into endless nights. It was hard to remember what day it was. Most of the time I hardly saw the sunlight through my drunken stupor. After the bar closed, there would be all night parties to attend and, countless men, men with false promises and lying lips, who under the shadow of darkness told me the things I wanted to hear and I needed to believe to survive. They said things like, I was different from all the rest, that they loved me, and would take care of me. The ending was always the same - lies, lies, lies. The only physical contact I ever had would be in those brief moments. It is my belief that God built us to love and be loved. How did it ever get so distorted? Be not deceived. The heart is a lonely hunter and we will find whatever form of love that

momentarily fills the deep chasms of our heart, whether it's counterfeit or not. And what did my parents think of my new career? They would laugh and joke about it. Some of Father's buddies had come to the club to check me out. Anything was acceptable as long as I wasn't their problem.

Soon a new guy came on the scene. His name was Doug. We would party at a lot of the same places and finally connect. When you're into the party scene nobody seems to notice if someone's drinking too much, especially back forty years ago, when drinking was a lot more acceptable than it is now. Doug drank to get drunk, but none of us noticed because we were pretty well all in the same bag. Although I wasn't really crazy about him, he came to me with a proposition, "Stay with me and you'll always have a home." Nine simple little words thrown together so carelessly, meaning so little to him, and so much to me - a home, a real home, a place of love and comfort - somewhere to lay my head every night. I was putty in the palm of his hand and I was his.

The Heart of the City Festival is back for its 7th season as a two-day festival! That right - two days of family-friendly, non-stop live entertainment, artisan tents, face painting for kids, food vendors, and roving artists. The Heart of the City Festival is free to the general public, and takes place Saturday, June 5th and Sunday, June 6th in Giovanni Park in Little Italy. Come join the festivities! For more information visit: www.hotcmf.com



PETER GOLDRING
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East

O CANADA "IN ALL THY SONS COMMAND"

Changing our national anthem to render the line "in all thy sons command" seemingly more gender neutral is grammatically unnecessary. "O Canada" is already gender neutral. We can check the dictionary or recall our historical precedents to see there is no need to make changes out of some sense of political correctness.

The word "son" has more than one definition; it does not necessarily refer to a male offspring. This is particularly true when referencing nationhood.

Take Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, tenth edition. A son is defined as: "a **person** closely associated with or deriving from a formative agent (as a nation, school, or race)." Or the Concise Oxford, ninth edition, which includes in its definition: "a **person** regarded as inheriting an occupation, quality etc. or associated with a particular attribute (sons of freedom, sons of the soil)." Hence, sons in this context can be seen as **persons**.

The 1929 "Person's Case" contested and won by the "Famous Five," which included well-known Albertan Emily Murphy, concluded that women are indeed persons.

Therefore, if sons are **persons** in the national context, then the word "sons" in our national anthem "O Canada" is gender neutral and indeed means both male and female persons.

The version of "O Canada" on which the official English lyrics are based was written in 1908 by Justice Robert Stanley Weir. Today's English version includes changes recommended by a Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons, which reviewed the anthem word for word for its appropriateness.

"O Canada" was proclaimed Canada's national anthem on July 1, 1980, one hundred years after it was first sung on June 24, 1880.

I see no reason to change the anthem's lyrics. The current anthem wording is politically correct and is gender neutral.

What do you think?

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Remanded to Alberta Hospital

After being held in the forensic unit of Alberta Hospital for almost five months on an assault charge, Dan Scaber was released with time served on Friday, April 9, 2010. Because he was considered medically unfit to enter a plea, he was held without bail and unable to deal with the charges until then. Finally, his doctor determined that he was fit to speak on his own behalf.

While he was in the hospital, Dan kept a journal of his day to day thoughts and actions. He was very concerned about the new health care bill passed the beginning of January that states persons can be forced into taking medication if the doctor believes it is in their best interest even if the patient does not agree.

Instead of the blue coveralls worn at the Remand Centre, once Dan was transferred to the forensic unit, he was permitted to wear his own clothing. In remand, all visits are "telephone visits" with no contact between the inmate and the visitor, but at Alberta Hospital all visits were open visits under the surveillance of a staff member. Visitors were allowed

to bring in "approved" items, such as the inmates clothing, personal care and food items in the original packaging, mail, paper, and pencils. Everything was left at the office where it was inspected before it was given to Dan, then visitors went through a metal detector and were escorted down several long hallways, and through a number of locked doors to the unit. Once there, they were locked in for a half hour visit, then escorted back.

Every visitor on Dan's list had to be cleared by the social worker. This took weeks. For the first month, he had only Mary, who works with him and who brought him food items, groceries and Noni Juice. Then, Norma, a friend and employee who picked up his mail, and paid his bills while he was incarcerated, was finally cleared to visit. Her visits ended abruptly the day she decided to bring Dan some art supplies including drawing pencils, paper and a protractor. The plastic protractor was confiscated, and Norma was barred from visiting for about a month for attempting to bring a "weapon" onto the ward.

From the Inside - Dan's

journal about life on the forensic unit of Alberta Hospital

December 29

Woke up about 7:30 for the staff clicked on the lights on high and I felt my eyes burn as they adjusted. I got up and dressed and came out to wash my face. I wet down my hair and proceeded to go for breakfast. I was early.

Breakfast was toast, powdered eggs. I had two cups of soy milk and one and a half cups of apple juice, and raspberry jam.

I came out and K. (a staff member) got me a razor and also took me out where one of the of the three in front of the nursing station commented that I was growing a goatee.

L, the charge nurse this morning, came out and put a notice on a patient's door. She commented to him that no one was to hear from him. It sounded cruel. I feel everyone is important. He shouldn't be disregarded. He is in a room with very little in it, naked and having to wear a diaper, likely because he may try to hurt himself with a cloth item. Some people try to choke themselves.

9 a.m. - K started defending drugs and disregarding a persons ability to think.

I asked for a new calling card. Norma (a friend) didn't like the idea that her visiting privileges were taken away over a protractor she tried to bring in for my drawings. C. and K (nurses) cheerfully chatting away as they talk about courses and education and working full time. I distracted K's thoughts.

I discussed having no children though the holidays due to restriction of the phones 6:30 p.m. Left a message for Norma.

Asked the staff if he would like to monitor my calls. He denied it. I said he is interested in the drugging of my mind.

December 30

9:30 I was asked would T., a patient) and I go to the gym by the nursing staff so I walked to the door to go. B, my nurse this morning, then said, "you're not allowed to go." I would say that she is either making mischief or suffering from memory loss. I discussed this with C. who said "I'm not your nurse."

9:45 - C. tried to send me to my room. Went out and talked to B. So far no one has come to see me in my room. I gave a small note to C. that said, "You can quit before you're implicated in a crime."

I watched the dietitian go through an upgraded diet for me. I did a review that I had my life attempted in 2004 at another hospital when my blood platelets were reduced. Then I reported the doctor and he shortly after committed suicide. I showed the dietitian the bruising and the exema. She acknowledged them and I told her of the restricting of my vitamins and organic lithium. I know her stress; I know how stress rises due to lack of Vitamin B and C. If I revealed it to the nurse she would likely suggest medication, which is hard on the cardiovascular system rather than Vitamin B. My

long-term stamina would be compromised.

C left at 10 p.m. and another nurse came on.

December 31

Asked if I could go to gym. Went to the door. I walked up to join the crew. E (a patient), was led to the door. She gets forgetful to get her shoes on and stuff. The nurse spoke out and gave E. heck for not being

prepared for gym. Later he shut the door on my face as I asked if I could go. I am still restricted from going to gym due to an incident with a nurse, J, on Dec. 10. I just turned around and brushed it off, went over and talked to T and spent some time with him. I played the guitar for a while using my guitar book. Nice to have it back due to Norma and her devotion as an employee and a friend.

8 p.m. We went and ordered Chinese food. It was quite a feast. J and I let M eat it up. My fortune cookie said "Toil a while and endure a while. Believe always and never turn back."

Staff supplied us with tacos and sodas before and salsa.

We killed some time and went for a walk. I needed to lie down earlier so I lay on the floor and looked under the 12-foot pool table. I found a loose stick with two nails sticking out - a molding. I showed it to the crew then pushed it back. Then I thought someone could get hurt with it so I took it to the nurse's station and gave it to R. He was concerned and thanked me for showing him. Later I saw him looking under the table for hazards as well. I think he may be a good man.

Night went very well.

I went to bed about 10:30. There was a change to the pill that R gave me. The size and shape were different. I was hoping that powers that be are changing things. I took the pills and went to bed. E started yelling for help and if anyone is out there so I tried to console her and told her to go to bed. I fell asleep and woke up normal and rested.

January. 1 - Happy New Year.

By Dan Scaber

Tribute to My Mother

For Mother's Day - May 9, 2010



My mother was a very independent person but for the last 3 years of her life, she lived in a nursing home. She was confined to bed except when she was lifted with a

hydraulic lift into her geri-chair. Mum progressively went blind, was unable to move herself from one side to another, and thus was completely dependent on others to help her. One would think that a person living in these circumstances would live in despair - but not so! Mum had a strong faith in Jesus

-- that He would help her through. We attended church and the Hymn Sings in the nursing home, and we listened to hymns on her stereo to keep her spirit strong. We went for walks and picnics outside and had family meals together. Family and friends came to visit as much as possible. As a result Mum was at peace most of the time and even kept her good sense of humor through it all.

Mum went to Heaven 3 1/2 years ago and I still miss her so much but I thank God for the last wonderful years that we had together! I feel that Mum, together with her Lord, triumphed over some of the most difficult circumstances. My mother was a great example to her family and all those around her!

P.S. I must add that my mother was not a model mother when I was growing up. I had many issues to work through and had to learn to forgive. But Mum's last 3 years were a blessing!

By Judy Brown

Edmonton Street News Annual General Meeting with Guest Speaker

7 p.m., May 19, 2010
Noodle Maker Restaurant, 9653 102 Avenue, (780) 428-0805

Join us for a short general meeting, to which everyone is invited, followed by a speech on an important public issue:

Residential Schools: Insights, Observations, Questions

Speaker—Harold Robinson

Harold Robinson is a lawyer and mediator who has worked for six years as an adju-

dicator with the Indian Residential Schools Independent Assessment Process. He also works as the tribunal secretary for the Métis Settlements Appeal Tribunal, Canada's only quasi-judicial Metis-based dispute resolution body. He will offer his experiences, observations and learnings about the independent assessment process and invite guest to share insights and learnings that he can use in his new role as a member of the board of directors of Homeward Trust.

Noodle Maker is located a few steps east of the China Gate on the south side of 102 Avenue. The eastbound Nos. 1, 2, and 5 buses stop directly in front. There is on-street parking on the north side of the avenue and pay parking in nearby lots.